

# Regional Conservation Partnership Program

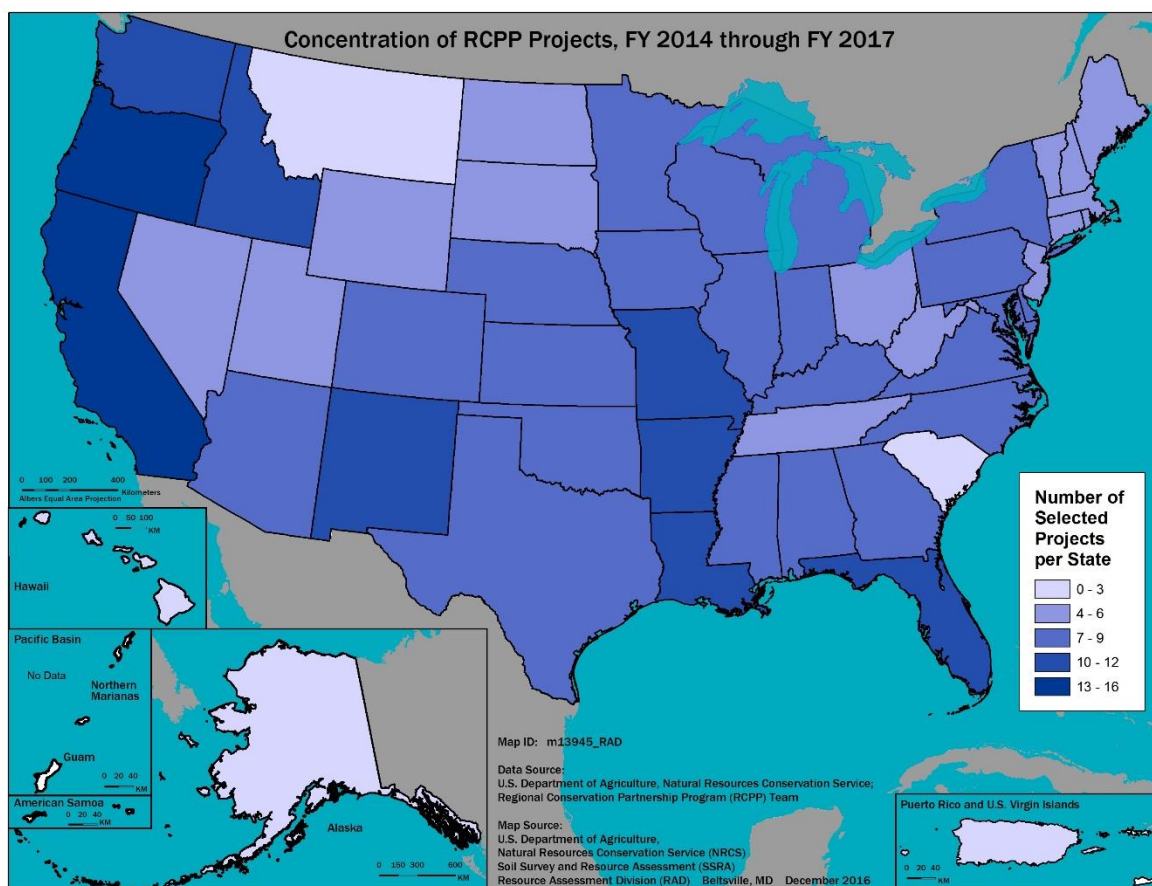
Investing in Nebraska



## Regional Conservation Partnership Program

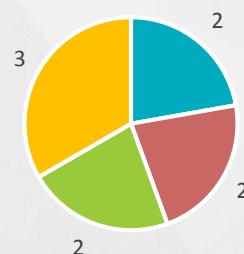
Created by the 2014 Farm Bill, the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) is a partner-driven, locally-led approach to conservation. It offers new opportunities for USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to harness innovation, welcome new partners to the conservation mission, and demonstrates the value and efficacy of voluntary, private lands conservation.

In 2017, NRCS is investing up to \$225 million in 88 projects that impact every state in the nation, including two in Nebraska. Since 2014, NRCS has invested more than \$825 million in 286 high-impact projects, bringing together more than 2,000 conservation partners who have invested an additional \$1.4 billion. By 2018, NRCS and partners will have invested at least \$2.4 billion. These projects are leading to cleaner and more abundant water, better soil and air quality, enhance wildlife habitat, more resilient and productive agricultural lands and stronger rural economies.



### Nebraska Projects to Date

#### Projects by Resource Concern



- Soil Health
- Water Quality
- Wildlife Habitat
- Water Quantity/Drought

9

Projects

**\$25.56  
million**

NRCS Investment

102

Partners

## Existing RCPP Projects

Year	Title	Funding Pool	Lead Partner	Number of Partners	NRCS Investment
2016	Cropland Cover for Soil Health and Wildlife	State	Nebraska Game and Parks Commission	2	\$700,000
2016	Innovative Tribal Conservation and GHG Management	National	Intertribal Agriculture Council	9	\$1.8 million
2016	Lower Elkhorn Water and Soil Conservation Project	State	Lower Elkhorn Natural Resources District	12	\$400,000
2016	Midwest Agriculture Water Quality Partnership	National	Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship	40	\$9.5 million
2016	Republican Basin Conservation Partnership	State	Lower Republican Natural Resources District	4	\$2.1 million
2014/2015	Ogallala Aquifer & Platte River Recovery	State	Central Platte Natural Resources District	4	\$2.7 million
2014/2015	Regional Grassland Bird and Grazing Lands Enhancement Initiative	National	The Missouri Department of Conservation	15	\$5 million

## 2017 RCPP Projects

### Wahoo Creek Water Quality Sites 26 and 27

Proposed NRCS Investment: \$1,500,000 (Critical Conservation Area – Prairie Grasslands Region)

Lead Partner: Lower Platte North Natural Resources District

Number of Initial Partners: 1

Participating States: Nebraska (Lead State)

The Lower Platte North Natural Resources District in Nebraska, with the assistance of the Natural Resources Conservation Service, completed the Wahoo Creek Watershed Plan and Environmental Impact Statement under the authority of Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act (Public Law 83-566). The watershed plan identified seventeen projects within the basin that will reduce rural and urban flooding, reduce sedimentation and scour, stabilize stream channels, enhance fish and wildlife habitat, enhance water quality, improve economic conditions and provide recreational opportunities. Seven of these structures were completed as an environmental enhancement project with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Through this project, partners will construct two (Sites 26 and 27) of the remaining ten uncompleted structures as identified in the Wahoo Creek Watershed Plan to address identified flooding and water quality concerns.



## Divots in the Pivots

Proposed NRCS Investment: \$1,863,750 (State)

Lead Partner: Upper Big Blue Natural Resources District

Number of Initial Partners: 15

Participating States: Nebraska (Lead State)

The Divots in the Pivots Project will restore habitat for wetland-dependent birds in Nebraska's Rainwater Basin through Natural Resource Conservation Service easements and enhanced irrigation efficiency through the Environmental Quality Incentive Program. Led by Upper Big Blue Natural Resources District and 14 partners, the project builds upon three decades of conservation projects, including easements, in the area. The integration of precision field mapping, monitoring soil moisture, evaluating crop water needs, and use of precision irrigation prescriptions will ensure irrigation is only completed when the crops need water, maximize inputs on the cropland and minimizing inputs within the restored wetland. The multi-programmatic approach of the current project will provide ideal wildlife habitat while maximizing net-farm income.